

REMARKS

The present amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action dated December 13, 2002, which set a three-month period for response, making this amendment due by March 13, 2003.

Claims 13-24 are pending in this application.

In the Office Action, the drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. The specification was objected to for various informalities. The numbering of the claims was objected to, and misnumbered claims 1-12 have been renumbered as claims 13-24. Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, has possession of the claimed invention.

Claims 13-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 13, 14, 16, and 21-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,054,640 to Tucker. Claims 13-15 and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,098,439 to Blow, Jr. et al. Claims 13, 14, 21, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,105,964 to Heath. Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blow, Jr., Tucker, and Heath. Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blow, Jr., Tucker, and Heath. Claim 17 was rejected

under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tucker in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,985,904 to Murch. Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heath in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,931,332 to Mygatt et al.

The Applicant notes with appreciation the indicated allowability of claim 19, if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Turning first to the objections to the drawings, with this amendment, the Applicant files two substitute drawing sheets containing new Figs. 1-6, which are to replace original Figs. 1-9.

The specification has been amended on pages 3-5 to delete the description of the drawings and detailed description relating to original Figs. 1-9 and to instead add description relating to the replacement Figs. 1-6.

In addition, the title of the invention and the abstract have both been amended to address the Examiner's objections.

With regard to the substantive rejection of the claims, the Applicant has canceled claims 13-24, and added new claims 25 and 26. New claim 25 combines the features of original claims 13, 14, 16, 21, and 22, while new claim 26 combines original claims 18 and 19.

The Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 25 and 26 each contain features neither shown nor suggested by the cited references, whether viewed alone or in the proposed combinations.

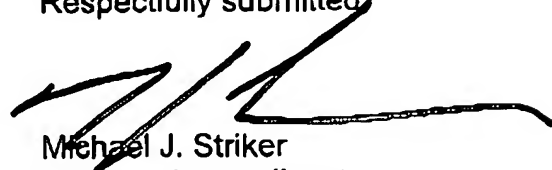
The entirety of the subject matter of the two new claims, the new drawings, and the respective descriptions of the drawings solely represent a clear exposition of some of the characteristics of the original claims, which are maintained in the two new ones. The primary purpose of the present amendment is to provide clarification requested by the Examiner, but without the introduction of any new matter.

Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that claims 25 and 26 are patentable over the cited references. The Applicant further requests withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103 and reconsideration of the claims as herein amended.

In light of the foregoing arguments in support of patentability, the Applicant respectfully submits that this application stands in condition for allowance. Action to this end is courteously solicited.

Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to discuss appropriate claim language that will place the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted



Michael J. Striker
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No.: 27233
103 East Neck Road
Huntington, New York 11743
631-549-4700